



6309 EDLOE • HOUSTON, TEXAS 77005-3699 • (713) 668-2341

Dear Southside Place Residents,

As a follow-up from our previous December communication with you, the purpose of this letter is to keep you informed of potential impacts to your property during the upcoming reconstruction of Poor Farm Ditch from University to Bellaire Blvd. The Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) recently advertised the project for bids, and construction is expected to commence sometime in late Spring/Early Summer of this year (2026). As a homeowner with a backyard adjacent to the channel, we wanted to inform you of a few key elements in general you should be aware of that could impact you during construction.

Generally speaking, and as many of you are already aware, a portion of your backyard is encumbered by an easement which was dedicated to HCFCD back in the 1950's. The easement area in general extends approximately 10-ft into your yard from the old 4-foot chain-link fence constructed in the 1950's. In many cases, your existing wood or wrought-iron fence is in the same or very close location, so you should expect that the easement extends 10-ft towards your house from that point. HCFCD's contractor will need full access to, and use of, this easement area during construction, which will require the area to be cleared.

The information in this letter can help you be better prepared for what to expect, and provides some general guidance that may or may not entirely apply to you. As a follow up, the City will be sending letters in February that will be specific to your backyard, including an exhibit to illustrate what if any encroachments need to be addressed. You can rest assured that access to this area by HCFCD's contractor is expected to be entirely from the channel side (not from the front of your house). Any suggested changes to this approach by HCFCD's contractor would be discussed with you in advance and not permitted without your explicit approval.

The following guide is offered for typical items that have been identified in various backyards WITHIN THE EASEMENT AREA and guidance for you to consider on how these should or will be addressed. Unless noted below, preservation of any personal property within the easement area will be your responsibility. If you have a question about any other items currently within the easement area that are not addressed below, please contact the City for additional discussion/guidance.

Yard Drains: Any yard drainage inlets and pipes located within the easement area that drain water directly to the existing ditch via underground pipe are not allowed per City Ordinance 163. All drainage structures located within the easement will be removed by the contractor, and any pipes leading from private property to the ditch will be cut and plugged at the outside edge of the easement. Stormwater drainage is allowed to “sheet flow” over regular land toward the ditch, but the City recommends you take appropriate measures to relocate any yard drains to the street (per City Ordinance 163) prior to construction.

Vegetation in General: You should expect that all vegetation within the easement area still in place when construction begins will be removed and disposed of. If you have any plants, flowers, shrubs or landscaping of any type that you wish to save, please move/transplant outside of the easement area prior to construction.

Irrigation Systems: If you have any irrigation (sprinklers) within the easement area, you are encouraged to cut and cap all pipes at a point outside the easement area. The contractor will be working within this area and if excavation is required, any pipes will be torn up as a part of this construction. The contractor is not responsible for replacing/repairing irrigation pipes within the easement area.

Fencing: There is no need to do anything with your fence unless you wish to save elements (such as wrought iron fencing) prior to construction. The contractor will cut and remove all fencing within the easement and place a temporary construction fence at the outside edge. After construction is complete, the contractor will install an 8-ft wood fence, which the City anticipates paying for pending council approval. If you prefer a different type of fence, please contact the City and any reasonable requests will be considered, but cannot be guaranteed.

Structures: If you have any structures, such as sheds, birdhouses, planters, or stone walkways that you wish to preserve, you will need to relocate them outside of the easement area. The contractor will otherwise remove and demolish.

A/C and Generator Pads: Any air-conditioner or generator pads located within the easement area will be protected in place by the contractor. Relocation will not be required.

We appreciate your collaboration and cooperation as this much needed and exciting projects moves into construction. If you would like to meet one-on-one with flood control staff, representatives will be here at city hall on Wednesday, January 14. Please call city hall or e-mail citymgr@southsideplacetx.gov for available time slots.

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In addition, the Harris County Poor Farm Ditch community engagement meeting will take place on Thursday, February 12 at 6:30 PM at Southside Place city hall.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Moss", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

David Moss
City Manager